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## US intel report on UFOs: No evidence of aliens, but ...

By **NOMAAN MERCHANT** and **ROBERT BURNS**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Whatever or whoever they are, they're still out there. U.S. intelligence is after them, but its upcoming report won't deliver any full or final truth about UFOs.

The tantalizing prospect of top government intel finally weighing in — after decades of conspiracy theories, TV shows, movies and winking jokes by presidents — will instead yield a more mundane reality that's not likely to change many minds on any side of the issue.

Investigators have found no evidence the sightings are linked to aliens — but can't deny a link either. Two officials briefed on the report due to Congress later this month say the U.S. government cannot give a definitive explanation of aerial phenomena spotted by military pilots.

The report also doesn't rule out that what pilots have seen may be new technologies developed by other countries. One of the officials said there is no indica-

tion the unexplained phenomena are from secret U.S. programs.

The officials were not authorized to discuss the information publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. Findings of the report were first published by The New York Times.

The report examines multiple unexplained sightings from recent years that in some cases have been captured on video of pilots exclaiming about objects flying in front of them.

Congress in December required the Director of National Intelligence to summarize and report on the U.S. government's knowledge of unidentified aerial phenomena, or UAPs — better known to the public as unidentified flying objects or UFOs. The effort has included a Defense Department UAP task force established last year. The expected public release of an unclassified version of the report this month will amount to a status report, not the final word, according to one official.



The image from video provided by the Department of Defense labelled Gimbal, from 2015, an unexplained object is seen at center as it is tracked as it soars high along the clouds, traveling against the wind.

Continued on next page

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**Continued from Front**

A Pentagon spokeswoman, Sue Gough, declined Friday to comment on news stories about the intelligence report. She said the Pentagon's UAP task force is "actively working with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on the report, and DNI will provide the findings to Congress." White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, when asked about the report, said of the question at first, "It's always a little wacky on Fridays." But she added, "I will say that we take reports of incursions into our airspace by any aircraft — identified or unidentified — very seriously and investigate each one."

The Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency have for decades looked into reports of aircraft or other objects in the sky flying at inexplicable speeds or trajectories.

The U.S. government takes unidentified aerial phenomena seriously given the potential national security risk of an adversary flying novel technology over a military base or another sensitive site, or the prospect of a Russian or



**White House press secretary Jen Psaki speaks during a press briefing at the White House, Thursday, June 3, 2021, in Washington.**

**Associated Press**

Chinese development exceeding current U.S. capabilities. This also is seen by the U.S. military as a security and safety issue, given that in many cases the pilots who reported seeing unexplained aerial phenomena were conducting combat training flights.

The report's lack of firm conclusions will likely disappoint people anticipating the report, given many

Americans' long-standing fascination with UFOs and the prospect of aliens having reached humankind. A recent story on CBS' "60 Minutes" further bolstered interest in the government report.

Luis Elizondo, former head of the Pentagon's Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program, said the one official's claim that there was no indicated

link to secret U.S. programs would be significant. But he called on the government to be fully transparent.

"I think that our tax dollars paid for information and data involving UFOs," Elizondo said. "And I think it is the U.S. government's obligation to provide those results to the American people." But skeptics caution that the videos and reported sightings have plausible

Earth-bound explanations. Mick West, an author, investigator, and longtime skeptic of UFO sightings, said he supported the military looking into any possible incursion of U.S. airspace, especially by an adversary.

"People are conflating this issue with the idea that these UFOs demonstrate amazing physics and possibly even aliens," West said. "The idea that this is some kind of secret warp drive or it's defying physics as we know it, there really isn't any good evidence for that."

The Pentagon last year announced a task force to investigate the issue, and the Navy in recent years created a protocol for its pilots to report any possible sightings. And lawmakers in recent years have pushed for more public disclosure.

"There's a stigma on Capitol Hill," Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., told "60 Minutes" in May.

"I mean, some of my colleagues are very interested in this topic and some kind of, you know, giggle when you bring it up. But I don't think we can allow the stigma to keep us from having an answer to a very fundamental question." □

## Legion official resigns over censored Memorial Day speech



**In this frame grab from video provided by Hudson Community Television, retired Army Lt. Col. Barnard Kemter taps the microphone after organizers turned off the audio during his speech at a Memorial Day ceremony, Monday, May 31, 2021, in Hudson, Ohio.**

**Associated Press**

**By JOHN SEEWER**  
**Associated Press**

The head of an American Legion post in Ohio stepped down Friday amid criticism following the decision of Memorial Day ceremony organizers to turn off a retired U.S. Army officer's microphone while he was speaking about how freed Black slaves

honored fallen soldiers just after the Civil War.

American Legion leaders in Ohio also suspended the post's charter and are taking steps to close it. The moves come in the wake of intense backlash to the decision to censor retired Army Lt. Col. Barnard Kemter, who said he included the story in his

speech because he wanted to share the history of how Memorial Day originated.

But organizers of the ceremony in Hudson, Ohio, said that section of the speech was not relevant to the program's theme of honoring the city's veterans.

Cindy Suchan, chair of the Memorial Day parade committee and president of the Hudson American Legion Auxiliary, said this week that either she or Jim Garrison, adjutant of the American Legion Post 464, turned down the audio, the Akron Beacon Journal reported.

Garrison resigned his leadership position a day after the state organization demanded he step down, said Roger Friend, department commander for the Ohio American Legion. Garrison has since been asked to drop his mem-

bership altogether, Friend said.

"The American Legion Department of Ohio does not hold space for members, veterans, or families of veterans who believe that censoring black history is acceptable behavior," Friend said in a statement. He said the censoring was premeditated and planned by Garrison and Suchan.

"They knew exactly when to turn the volume down and when to turn it back up," Friend said.

In the days before the ceremony, Suchan said she reviewed the speech and asked Kemter to remove certain portions. Kemter said he didn't see the suggested changes in time to rewrite the speech.

Kemter, who spent 30 years in the Army and served in the Persian Gulf War, told The Beacon Journal he

was disappointed that the organizers silenced two minutes of his 11-minute speech.

His microphone cut out just as began talking about how former slaves and freed Black men exhumed the remains of more than 200 Union soldiers from a mass grave in Charleston, South Carolina, and gave them a proper burial.

Kemter at first thought there was a problem with audio, tapping on the microphone.

The decision to silence him disrespected Kemter and all veterans, Hudson's mayor and City Council said in a statement Thursday.

"Veterans have done everything we have asked of them during their service to this country, and this tarnished what should have been a celebration of their service," the statement said. □

# Senate GOP pans Biden infrastructure plan, preps new offer

By LISA MASCARO and KEVIN FREKING

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Senate Republicans on Friday panned President Joe Biden's latest infrastructure proposal and were expected to make a revised offer as talks grind toward next week's slipping deadline for progress on a bipartisan deal.

Speaking after the release of a modest May jobs report, Biden made the case for his robust investment package to push the economy past the COVID-19 crisis and downturn, and into a new era.

"Now is the time to build on the progress we've made," Biden told reporters in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. "We need to make those investments today to continue to succeed tomorrow."

Biden was talking again Friday with the lead GOP negotiator, Sen. Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, in what the White House characterized as a discussion rather than an exchange of formal proposals.

Capito's office released a statement with few details except to say the two spoke by telephone on a bipartisan infrastructure package and "agreed to connect again on Monday."

The White House had been eyeing a deadline early next week as Congress



In this photo taken Thursday, May 27, 2021, Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., the GOP's lead negotiator on a counteroffer to President Joe Biden's infrastructure plan, speaks at a news conference as she is joined by, from left, Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, and Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., at the Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

returns from its Memorial Day break to see progress toward a deal and Democrats are setting ground work for a go-it-alone approach. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has indicated that Biden will look to act without Republican support if there is no consensus.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki downplayed any hard-set deadline Friday and said the administration continues to talk to lawmakers from both parties,

giving a nod to a group of bipartisan senators who are privately working on possible areas of compromise with the White House.

"There's runway left," Psaki told reporters at the White House. "We're going to keep a range of pathways open."

For weeks, the president has been engaged in talks with GOP senators trying to strike a compromise on Biden's top legislative priority, the big infrastructure investment package. While

the two sides appear to have narrowed the price gap between his initial \$2.3 trillion proposal and the GOP's \$568 billion opening bid, they remain far apart on how to pay for what could be a compromise \$1 trillion investment.

Republicans are showing no interest in Biden's latest proposal for a 15% corporate minimum tax rate that would ensure all companies pay something in taxes, rather than allowing so many write-offs or deduc-

tions that they contribute zero to the treasury.

A Republican familiar with the talks and granted anonymity to discuss the private assessment said the GOP senators view Biden's latest idea as an unnecessary tax hike.

Instead, Republicans were poised to submit a revised offer when Capito spoke with Biden again Friday, the person said. They will insist on using untapped COVID-19 relief funds to pay for the infrastructure investments, the Republican said. Biden's team has rejected that approach.

Still, neither Biden nor the GOP senators appear ready to call off talks, even as Democrats prepare to use budget rules to pass any big package on their own, without Republican votes.

On Friday, House Democrats released a plan for spending \$547 billion over the next five years on road, mass transit and rail projects, a blueprint of their priorities and a potential building block for Biden's broader package.

The proposal from Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio, the Democratic chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, continues existing programs set to expire and adds key pieces of the larger measure Biden is negotiating with Republicans. □

## U.S. traffic deaths up 7% last year, highest number since 2007

**DETROIT (AP)** — U.S. traffic deaths rose 7% last year, the biggest increase in 13 years even though people drove fewer miles due to the coronavirus pandemic, the government's road safety agency reported Thursday.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration blamed the increase on drivers taking more risks on less-congested roads by speeding, failing to wear seat belts, or driving while impaired by drugs or alcohol.

An estimated 38,680 people died in traffic crashes

last year, the most of any year since 2007, the agency said in releasing preliminary numbers. Final numbers normally come out in the fall.

The increase came even though the number of miles traveled by vehicle fell 13% from 2019.

Motorcyclist deaths rose 9% last year to 5,015, while bicyclist deaths were up 5% to 846.

Pedestrian deaths remained steady at 6,205, and the number of people killed in passenger vehicles rose 5% to 23,395, according to NHTSA.



In this Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020, file photo, emergency crews work the scene of a fatal crash involving a charter bus and car on the AA highway in Campbell County, Ky.

Associated Press

Deaths involving a large truck fell 2%, while traffic fatalities among people 65 and older fell 9%.

The agency said it has data showing that speeds increased through the year, and examples of extreme speeding became more common. Preliminary data from the Federal Highway Administration shows that vehicle miles traveled fell by about 430.2 billion miles last year when compared with 2019. There were 1.37 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in 2020, up from 1.11 deaths a year earlier. □

# Facebook suspends Trump for 2 years, then will reassess

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**  
AP Technology Writer

Facebook announced Friday that former President Donald Trump's accounts will be suspended for two years, freezing his presence on the social network until early 2023, following a finding that Trump stoked violence ahead of the deadly Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol.

At the end of the suspension, the company will assess whether Trump's "risk to public safety" has subsided, Nick Clegg, Facebook's vice president of global affairs, wrote in a blog post. He said Facebook will take into account "external factors" such as instances of violence, restrictions on peaceful assembly and other markers of civil unrest. Facebook also announced that it would end a contentious policy that automatically exempted politicians from rules banning hate speech and abuse, and that it would stiffen penalties for public figures during times of civil unrest and violence.

The former president called Facebook's decision on the suspension "an insult." The two-year ban replaced a previous ruling that ordered Trump to be suspended indefinitely.

"They shouldn't be allowed to get away with this censoring and silencing, and ultimately, we will win. Our Country can't take this abuse anymore!" Trump said in a news release.

Social platforms like Facebook and Twitter have become indispensable tools for politicians to get their messages out and to raise small-dollar donations. Without the megaphone of Twitter and the targeted fundraising appeals his campaign mastered on Facebook, Trump could be at a serious disadvantage relative to other politicians. Trump has teased running for president again in 2024. His aides say that he has been working on launching his own social media platform to compete with those that have booted him, but one has yet to materialize. A blog he launched on his



In this Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2020 file photo, President Donald Trump speaks during a briefing with reporters in the James Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House, in Washington.

Associated Press

existing website earlier this year was shut down after less than a month. It attracted dismal traffic.

On Facebook, Trump's suspension means that his account is essentially frozen. Others can read and comment on past posts, but Trump and other account handlers are unable to post new material. Twitter, by contrast, has permanently banned Trump from its service, and no trace of his account remains.

"What they've done here is shield themselves from potential presidential rage" with a reassessment of Trump's account in two years, said Jennifer Grygiel, a Syracuse University communications professor.

In a color-coded chart on its blog post, the company said public figures who violate its policies during times of crisis can be restricted from posting for a month (yellow) or as long as two years (red). Future violations, it said, will be met with "heightened penalties, up to and including permanent removal."

The policy that exempted politicians from rules on hate speech and abuse was once championed by CEO Mark Zuckerberg. The company said it never applied the policy to Trump, but on Friday backtracked to say it did use it once, in

2019 for a video of a rally on his Facebook page.

The social media giant said it will still apply the "newsworthiness" exemption to certain posts it deems to be in the public interest, even if they violate Facebook rules. But it will no longer treat material posted by politicians any differently than other posts. In addition, Facebook said it will make public whenever it does apply the exemption to a post.

The announcements are in response to recommendations from the company's quasi-independent oversight board. Last month, that panel upheld a decision by Facebook to keep Trump suspended, but the board said the company could not merely suspend him indefinitely. It gave the company six months to decide what to do with his accounts.

In its decision last month, the board agreed with Facebook that two of Trump's Jan. 6 posts "severely violated" the content standards of both Facebook and Instagram.

"We love you. You're very special," Trump said to the rioters in the first post. In the second, he called them "great patriots" and told them to "remember this day forever."

Those comments violated

Facebook's rules against praising or supporting people engaged in violence, the board said. Specifically, the board cited rules against "dangerous individuals and organizations" that prohibit anyone who proclaims a violent mission and ban posts that express support for those people or groups.

The two-year suspension is effective from Jan. 7, so Trump has 19 months to go. A group calling itself the Real Facebook Oversight Board, which is critical of Facebook and its oversight panel, said in a statement Friday that the ban brings Trump back just in time for the 2024 presidential election and shows "no real strategy to address authoritarian leaders and extremist content, and no intention of taking serious action against disinformation and hate speech."

Due to its sheer size and power, Facebook's decision has broad implications for politicians and their constituencies around the globe. Chinmayi Arun, a fellow at Yale Law School's Information Society Project, said it's good that the company laid out a standard for when it will suspend political leaders and for how long.

"What's tremendous is that Facebook took the over-

sight board's recommendation to reevaluate the real-world context and the offline tensions, while deciding what to do with a politician's online speech," she said. But she remains concerned that suspensions cannot be reviewed unless Facebook asks.

For years, Facebook gave the former president special treatment and free reign to spread misinformation and threats on the platform. Outside critics and even Facebook's own employees called for the company to remove Trump long before the Jan. 6 comments.

Last summer, for instance, Zuckerberg decided to leave up posts by Trump that suggested protesters in Minneapolis could be shot, using the words "when the looting starts, the shooting starts." Trump's comment evoked the civil-rights era by borrowing a phrase used in 1967 by Miami's police chief to warn of an aggressive police response to unrest in Black neighborhoods.

While Facebook put labels on many of Trump's election posts, he did not face penalties such as suspension for repeatedly and falsely claiming victory in 2020.

In Friday's post, Clegg anticipated criticism from both sides of the political aisle.

"We know that any penalty we apply — or choose not to apply — will be controversial. There are many people who believe it was not appropriate for a private company like Facebook to suspend an outgoing President from its platform, and many others who believe Mr. Trump should have immediately been banned for life," he wrote. Facebook's job, he said, is "to make a decision in as proportionate, fair and transparent a way as possible, in keeping with the instruction given to us by the Oversight Board."

But by staying in the middle, some experts said Facebook had once again punted the decision instead of taking a firm stance. □

# Putin chafes at U.S., criticizes response to Capitol attack

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV  
Associated Press

**MOSCOW (AP)** — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday set a tough tone for his upcoming summit with U.S. President Joe Biden, accusing Washington of trying to contain Russia and citing its response to the deadly Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol as a manifestation of the West's double standards.

Speaking at an economic forum in St. Petersburg, Putin said that arms control, global conflicts, the coronavirus pandemic and climate change are among the issues he and Biden would discuss at their June 16 summit in Geneva.

"We need to find ways of looking for a settlement in our relations, which are at an extremely low level now," Putin said.

"We don't have any issues with the U.S.," he continued. "But it has an issue with us. It wants to contain our development and publicly talks about it. Economic restrictions and attempts to influence our country's domestic politics, relying on forces they consider their allies inside Russia, stem from that."

He voiced hope that the meeting will help ease tensions with Washington. Russia-U.S. ties have sunk to post-Cold War lows over Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, accusations of Russian interference in elections in the U.S. and other Western nations, and cyberattacks that U.S. officials allege had Russian origins.

Putin reiterated that Russia rejects accusations of interfering in U.S. presidential elections, and he spoke critically of the U.S. response to the Capitol attack, which took place as Congress prepared to certify that Biden had defeated then President Donald Trump in the November election.

"They weren't just a crowd of robbers and rioters. Those people had come with political demands," he said.

Putin pointed out that the heavy charges against



Russian President Vladimir Putin gestures as he speaks at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia, Friday, June 4, 2021.

Associated Press

hundreds of participants in the attack were filed even as the U.S. and its allies strongly criticized Belarus' crackdown on anti-government protests. And he charged that even as the West has criticized Russian authorities for a harsh response to anti-Kremlin demonstrations, protesters in Europe have faced an even tougher police response, with some shot in the eye by what he mockingly called "democratic rubber bullets."

In separate comments to Russia's Channel 1 state television, Putin added that he doesn't expect any breakthroughs from the summit with Biden, but added that he hopes that it will help "create conditions for taking further steps to normalize Russian-U.S. relations."

He praised Biden as a "very experienced statesman who has been involved in politics for his entire life ... and a very prudent and careful person. I do hope that our meeting will be positive," Putin said.

He also took time to scathingly deride the allegations of Russian hackers' involvement on a U.S. pipeline and a meat plant that have clouded the atmosphere before the summit.

"I do hope that people would realize that there

hasn't been any malicious Russian activity whatsoever," he said. "I heard something about the meat plant. — It's sheer nonsense. We all understand it's just ridiculous. A pipeline? It's equally absurd."

Putin said "the U.S. special services should track down those ransom seekers. It's certainly not Russia that would extort money from some company. We don't deal with chicken or beef, it's plain ridiculous."

He alleged the hacking accusations were aired by those who try to "provoke new conflicts before our meeting with Biden," and added on a positive note that some in the U.S. doubted Russian involvement in the hacks.

"It means that inside the American society, media and political class there are people who want to find ways to repair U.S.-Russian relations," he said.

On other issues, Putin praised his country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and called for a stronger worldwide response to global warming as he sought to bolster Russia's international standing. Addressing the forum, Putin lauded the efficiency of Russian-designed vaccines and bemoaned what he described as "politically motivated bans" on their

purchase in some countries.

Last year, Russia boasted of being the first in the world to authorize a coronavirus vaccine but it has since moved slowly in giving shots to its population. The slack pace of vaccination has been partly attributed to public skepticism about the vaccines amid controversial signals from the authorities.

Experts have questioned whether Russia will be able to meet the government target of vaccinating more than 30 million of the country's 146 million people by mid-June, and nearly 69 million by August.

Putin again urged the Russians to move quickly to get the shots, and he invited foreigners to Russia to get vaccinated, saying he would instruct the government to facilitate that.

He also emphasized the need to strengthen the international response to climate change, noting that melting permafrost has mounted a major challenge to Russia's Arctic regions.

"We have entire cities built on permafrost," he said. "What will happen if it all starts melting?"

Putin said laying the pipes for the first of two lines of the prospective Nord Stream 2 pipeline to Germany has

been completed, leaving only welding to finalize its construction. He said the second line will follow suit soon.

The U.S. has strongly opposed construction of the Russian pipeline, but the Biden administration opted last month not to punish the German company overseeing the project — while announcing new sanctions against Russian companies and ships. The Kremlin has hailed it as a "positive signal" before the Putin-Biden summit.

The Russian leader hailed the project as more economically feasible compared with an existing pipeline via Ukraine, rejecting Ukrainian and Western criticism that it's designed to rob Kyiv of transit fees.

Putin said Russia will continue pumping via Ukraine 40 billion cubic meters of gas a year in line with an existing five-year contract, and could continue doing so after it expires if Ukraine shows "goodwill."

Russia and Ukraine have been locked in a tense tug-of-war following Moscow's 2014 annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and its support for separatist insurgents in eastern Ukraine.

Putin deplored what he described as the U.S. use of the dollar as a political weapon, saying that "its use as an instrument of competition and political struggle has hurt its role as the world reserve currency."

Russia said Thursday it will completely remove the U.S. dollar from its National Wealth Fund and turn the dollar-denominated assets into euros, yuan and gold. Russia long has moved to reduce the dollar's share in its hard currency reserves as it has faced U.S. sanctions amid tensions with Washington and its allies. □



# Fishermen feeling the impact of Sri Lanka ship disaster

By ERANGA JAYAWARDENA  
Associated Press

**KEPUMGODA, Sri Lanka (AP)** — Sri Lanka's fishermen are already feeling the impact of an unfolding environmental disaster caused by the slow sinking of a fire-ravaged cargo ship that had been loaded with chemicals.

Fishing remained banned Friday along about 80 kilometers (50 miles) of coastline, as debris from the Singapore-flagged MV X-Press Pearl — including tons of plastic pellets and burned fiberglass — continued to wash ashore.

Authorities were also on guard for the possible leak of oil and chemicals from the ship, which started sinking off the country's main port on Wednesday, a day after a fire that raged on the vessel for 12 days was extinguished.

A lone fisherman, Kinson Jayalath, was defying the ban Friday on Kepumgoda beach. He said he was trying to catch food for his family but was growing frustrated by the lack of fish in an area where he said there had been plenty just a week ago.

In a nearby village home to



**Sri Lankan man, Kindston Jayalath fishes on a polluted beach filled with plastic pellets washed ashore from the fire-damaged container ship MV X-Press Pearl in Kapungoda, on the outskirts of Colombo, Sri Lanka, Friday, June 4, 2021.**

Associated Press

many people who depend on the fishing industry, Ajith Nelson said even before the restrictions were announced fishermen were having their nets ruined by huge chunks of cottonlike material that became entangled in them.

While fishing is still allowed in deeper waters, sales of seafood have plummeted because consumers fear chemical contamination,

said Herman Kumara of the National Fisheries Solidarity Movement.

As the the ship started to sink, crews tried to tow it into deeper waters away from the port but failed after the ship's stern became submerged and rested on the seabed 21 meters (70 feet) below the surface. The ship was continuing to take on water Friday.

Shumel Yoskovitz, the chief

executive of the ship's operators X-Press Feeders, apologized for disaster Friday in an interview with Channel News Asia.

"I'd like to express my deep regret and apology to the Sri Lankan people for the harm this incident has caused both to the livelihood and environment of Sri Lanka," Yoskovitz said.

The fire erupted on May 20 when the ship was an-

chored about 9.5 nautical miles (18 kilometers) northwest of Colombo and waiting to enter the port.

X-Press Feeders have said the fire destroyed most of the ship's cargo, which included 25 tons of nitric acid and other chemicals. It has said salvage experts were remaining with the vessel to monitor its condition and any pollution.

Colombo port Harbor Master Nirmal Silva said tons of oil in the ship's fuel tanks may also have burned out with the fire, but authorities were prepared to deal with an oil spill.

Both the navy and coast guard have been preparing for a spill with assistance from neighboring India. India has sent three ships to help, including one specifically equipped to deal with marine pollution.

Sri Lankan police are probing the fire, and a court in Colombo on Tuesday banned the captain, the engineer and the assistant engineer from leaving the country. The government has said it will take legal action against the owners of the ship to claim compensation. □

Kumara's fishing group

# Japan LGBTQ activists push for equality law before Olympics



**Yuri Igarashi, right, a co-chair of the Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation speaks at a press conference in Tokyo Friday, June 4, 2021.**

Associated Press

By MARI YAMAGUCHI  
Associated Press

**TOKYO (AP)** — Japanese sexual minority groups and their supporters, in a last-ditch effort to get long-sought equality legislation

passed before the Tokyo Olympics, submitted requests on Friday to the governing Liberal Democratic Party, whose conservative members have stalled the bill.

The groups also have widened their campaign to gain corporate support for their cause in hopes of pressuring Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's pro-business party to support the legislation.

"In order to protect the lives and livelihood of sexual minorities, enacting a LGBT law that states discrimination is not tolerated is an indispensable first step," said Kane Doi, Japan director for the New York-based group Human Rights Watch.

"An enactment of such a law in Japan ahead of the Olympics is also necessary for the international community," Doi said, adding that Japan needs to demonstrate its commitment to ensuring equality for LGBTQ athletes, journalists and other participants in the

Olympics, set to begin July 23.

Support and awareness of sexual diversity has slowly grown in Japan, but there is still a lack of legal protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Japan does not legally recognize same-sex partnerships, and LGBTQ people often suffer discrimination at school, work and even at home, causing many to hide their sexual identities.

"Japan is far behind the international standard," said Yuri Igarashi, co-chair of the Japan Alliance for LGBT Legislation. She noted growing support from the business community, including Panasonic, which on Friday became the 23rd company pledging support for the cause.

Rights groups are push-

ing for the passage of the equality act as international attention falls on Tokyo as it hosts the Olympics. The International Olympic Committee also issued a statement stressing the importance of inclusivity in sports.

Prospects for passage of the legislation before the current parliamentary session ends next week are uncertain because of strong resistance from conservatives in Suga's party.

On Friday, members of LGBTQ groups and supporters submitted requests at the governing party's regional headquarters in Tokyo, Osaka, Aichi and other areas.

Remarks by some party members during discussions of the bill last month sparked outrage from rights groups. □

## U.N. agency withdraws director from Gaza after threats

**JERUSALEM (AP)** — The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees says it has recalled its Gaza director after he faced threats over remarks in which he appeared to praise Israel's "huge sophistication" in carrying out precision strikes during last month's Gaza war.

UNRWA, which provides essential health, education and other services in the territory, said late on Thursday that it was "seriously concerned" about the threats, including a "very large protest" outside its Gaza headquarters on Monday. It said Gaza director Matthias Schmale and his deputy have been recalled to UNRWA's headquarters in east Jerusalem for "consultations." The agency cited media reports that "Palestinian factions" had declared Schmale and his deputy persona non grata in Gaza but said it received no formal notification to that effect.

In an interview with Israel's Channel 12 TV last month, Schmale was asked about Israeli officials' assertions that airstrikes carried out during the 11-day war with the territory's militant Hamas rulers were "very precise."

"I'm not a military expert but I would not dispute that," Schmale replied, adding that there was "huge sophistication" in how Israel struck targets. But he also said colleagues told him the strikes were "much more



**Bags of foodstuffs provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are loaded into the back of a vehicle as Palestinians collect food aid following a cease-fire reached after an 11-day war between Gaza's Hamas rulers and Israel, in Gaza City, Saturday, May 22, 2021.**

vicious in their impact" than in the 2014 Gaza war.

Schmale later expressed regret over the remarks and said any civilian deaths were unacceptable.

"Many people were killed or have been severely injured by direct strikes or collateral damage from strikes," he tweeted. "In a place as densely populated as Gaza, any strike will have huge damaging effects on people and buildings."

His original remarks were widely circulated in Israeli media and online, where they were seized upon by Israel's supporters as an endorsement of its conduct

and provoked outrage among Palestinians.

Israel carried out hundreds of airstrikes on Gaza during the 11-day war, in which Hamas and other militant groups fired more than 4,000 rockets at Israel. At least 254 people were killed in Gaza, including 67 children and 39 women, according to the Gaza health ministry. Hamas has acknowledged the deaths of 80 militants. Twelve civilians, including two children, were killed in Israel, along with one soldier.

UNRWA provides essential services to some 5.7 million refugees in the occupied

West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. They include Palestinians who fled or were driven out of what is now Israel during the 1948 war surrounding its creation and their descendants.

It provides food aid and other vital services in Gaza, which has been under a crippling Israeli-Egyptian blockade since Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces in 2007. Most of Gaza's population of 2 million are registered refugees. At the height of the war, some 70,000 Gazans sheltered in UNRWA schools.

Meanwhile, an Egyptian

convoy crossed into Gaza with heavy equipment to take part in rubble removal ahead of preparations for rebuilding of thousands of houses and businesses destroyed or damaged during the latest Gaza war.

Excavators, bulldozers and trucks entered Gaza through the Rafah border crossing with Egypt on Friday afternoon. Egypt's state-run MENA news agency said it was part of "an Egyptian commitment to improve the living conditions" in Gaza.

Egypt brokered the cease-fire that ended the Israel-Hamas fighting.

Late Friday, the Palestinian Red Crescent said 23 runners were injured when Israeli police fired tear gas and stun grenades at an activist-organized marathon in solidarity with Palestinians in east Jerusalem threatened with evictions. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

The race had started from Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, where dozens of Palestinians face evictions from their homes under a law allowing Jewish settlers to reclaim properties, and was to end in the nearby Silwan neighborhood.

One of the runners, Jalal Abu Khater, posted images of his bruised leg and tweeted: "I was beaten six times, attacked by Israeli forces, for running in my ancestral town & city." □

Associated Press

## Mexico's top security official: Violence unrelated to races

**MEXICO CITY (AP)** — Mexico's secretary of the interior said Thursday that attacks that have killed 35 candidates or contenders for nominations and threats to others are largely unrelated to Sunday's elections.

Olga Sanchez Cordero, Mexico's top domestic security official, called the violence "isolated incidents" and said they might affect races in less than 10 of Mexico's over 2,500 municipalities.

She said most of the incidents were related to dis-

putes over land, benefit programs or other community issues. Others may have to do with pressure groups of farmers or workers, or criminal organizations. Sanchez Cordero said "the vast majority have no relation to the elections."

According to the Etellekt consulting firm, 35 candidates or primary contenders have been killed in Mexico so far this election season. Most of those killed were running for local posts, like mayor or town council seats. Some were from mi-

nor parties who appeared to have little chance of winning. But analysts say drug cartels in Mexico may have attacked some candidates because they threatened to draw votes away from the gangs' favorites.

Experts say criminal gangs often seek to control local government, because that can earn them opportunities to extort money from municipal budgets, identify lucrative kidnap or extortion victims, and gain the support or acquiescence of local police. □



**Mayoral candidate Guillermo Valencia with the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, puts on his bulletproof vest at a relative's home before campaigning in Morelia, Michoacan state, Mexico, Friday, May 21, 2021.**

Associated Press

# Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, twice a week culinary magic by European top chefs in a romantic garden

**PALM BEACH** —A true once-in-a-lifetime experience is coming up. The stage: an Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambiance. The play: The Chef's Garden; a 6-course culinary voyage by a Michelin-trained chef from Belgium, Griet Vanbrabant on Wednesdays and French-Asian gastronomic ecstasy by Dutch top chef Martijn Liebrechts on Tuesdays. You will leave this culinary garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Be sure to reserve this opportunity before others do. This production is presented to you by Papillon Restaurant.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Tuesday and Wednesday from 7pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chefs, Vanbrabant and Liebrechts- who will be on the island for a limited time period - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

### A bit about Griet and Martijn

Vanbrabant is a passionate chef with over 15 years of experience in fine dining menu development, culinary staff management, food preparation and creative recipe design.

She is educated in classic French Cuisine and Modern Gastronomy teachings throughout her international career in Michelin star and the World's 50 Best restaurants such as El Bulli and Comerc 24 in Barcelona, Pujol in Mexico City, Rockpool in Australia. Let her entice you with her succulent, Aruban recipes like they've never tasted before.

Liebrechts is the perfect example of when career and passion come together. He earned his spurs at Ambe, one of the best French fine dining restaurants Hong Kong has to offer, with 2 Michelin-stars and ranked as the 24th best restaurant in the world. Ambe has been the place where he got inspired by the use of Asian ingredients prepared in a classical French way which is still the base of his nowadays cooking style. Moving back to Amsterdam, The Netherlands, he joined the team of former Bib Gourmand restaurant "Wilde Zwijnen", which was awarded the title "The New Dutch Cuisine" by the New York Times. He has been there and done it all around the world.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Diet options are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

### The Secret Garden & Papillon

This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinarian delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion



of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. They know

how to thrill and in collaboration with The Secret Garden we can only expect phenomenal. ☐



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## Loyal visitors honored at Courtyard by Marriott

EAGLE BEACH — Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Distinguished Visitors of Aruba and Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba. The Distinguished visitor certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of

appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 10 years and more consecutively. The Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of

Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were Mrs. Donna Nuccio & Mrs. Karen Thompson as Distinguished Visitors of Aruba together with Mrs. Donna Rutledge as a Goodwill ambassador of Aruba.

This lovely group of ladies stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches, its safety, the exceptional hospitality at the Courtyard by Marriott Aruba Resort, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom became like family to them.

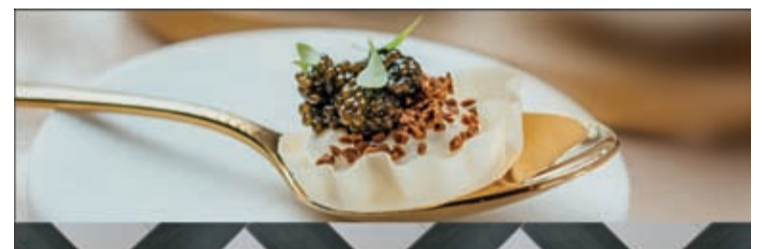
Richardson together with the representatives of the Courtyard by Marriott Aruba Resort presented the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □



## A Review of Memorial Day on Eagle Beach



EAGLE BEACH — Last Monday May 31, 2021 Veterans, families and friends gathered on the beach at Costa Linda Beach Resort to celebrate Memorial Day. This ceremony has become an annual event which welcomes veterans from all nations to take part and which attracts many viewers. Here's a view on this year's celebration. □



**infini**  
by Uva Cova

Taste limitless possibilities at Infini, where Chef Urvin Croes and his team explores without boundaries and steps with both feet outside of the box to create his most sensational dishes yet. This meticulously designed restaurant located inside Blue Residences on scenic Eagle Beach is a chef's table concept with limited seating where diners are able to interact with the staff and other guests alike throughout the evening.

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## CaribResearch preparing a research agenda for the 6 Caribbean territories of the Dutch Kingdom

**ORANJESTAD — CaribResearch is an independent, non-governmental research foundation founded in Aruba in 2018 and registered with the Aruba Chamber of Commerce. CaribResearch is the first and, so far, only research foundation that represents all 6 Caribbean regions of the Kingdom of The Netherlands: Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, Saba and Statia. CaribResearch's 9 board members are local academic professionals with research experience and in-depth knowledge and understanding of the local cultures, history and realities of the 6 territories. CaribResearch's advisory board consists of research experts from Aruba, Curaçao, Puerto Rico, the Netherlands and the US.**

The research foundation has accepted the responsibility to conduct high-quality, culturally rel-

evant, ethically responsible and systemic and integrated research, with the aim of serving the resilience, advancement, and sovereignty of the communities of the Caribbean regions in the Caribbean Netherlands. The privilege and responsibility to initiate, conduct, coordinate and interpret local research lies primarily in the hands of local research experts who best understand local phenomena and have the fundamental right to give meaning to and create knowledge and insights about their own local phenomena. CaribResearch is creating a strong organization capable of assuming that responsibility and can currently count on a group of approximately 15 research area coordinators and 20 members of the research communities organized around on the research areas. Members of our research communities also include

the research expert diaspora living abroad. We are currently in the final design phase of its 2021-2025 Research Agenda, which focuses on the central theme: "Re-imagining our realities: Strengthening our capacities to deal with crises". The Research Agenda comprises the following 5 research areas: 1) History and construction of society; 2) Governance, Institutions and Integrity; 3) Economy, Finance and Entrepreneurship; 4) Education, Schooling and Language; and 5) Environment, Technology and Progress. On Saturday, May 29, 2021, CaribResearch organized a very successful online work session with all stakeholders in the organization: board members, members of the Advisory Board, research area coordinators and members of our growing "communities of researchers". Another online work session will be organized on June

19, 2021: both work sessions focus on selecting the final research priorities for our territories for 2021-2025 in an interactive process of open dialogue and exchange. After the presentation of its Research Agenda 2021-2025, CaribResearch will enter a next phase in which concrete research projects will be carried out in a structured manner, local research competences in research design and both quantitative and qualitative research methodology will be strengthened further; and construction of relevant conceptual frameworks and thematic seminars will take place. In addition, collaboration projects will be carried out between CaribResearch and local, regional and international partner organizations. CaribResearch will soon launch its website to keep all interested informed about its research activities. □

## Exprodesk presents 'Export Week – Conquering New Horizons'

**ORANJESTAD — The Department of Economic Affairs, Trade and Industry DEACI unit Exprodesk organizes 'Export Week 2021 – Conquering New Horizon'. This will take place virtually from June 7 to June 11 starting at 9.00 am. This event is completely free and taught in English.**

### Export week 'Conquering new horizons'

Export week 2021 is organized for all local entrepreneurs. During the Export Week summit, participants will receive valuable information about E-commerce, digital payments, logistics, 'blockchain' and 'cryptocurrencies'. They also cover topics such as selling products or services online, creating traffic and conversion on websites, receiving payments via websites, Facebook, Instagram or WhatsApp and digital market. Other topics covered are 'Agriledger' and what farmers can do with 'blockchain'. They will also receive information on logistics



between Aruba and the United States, China and the Dominican Republic. Each participant is guided in the direction of E-commerce.

The program starts with information about traditional e-commerce, followed by the female entrepreneurs of Empowered Women Exporters who will share their experiences on how they

export their products and or services. Finally, they will provide information about innovation and the future of e-commerce.

### Local and international speakers

The summit will have 14 local speakers and 11 international speakers for a total of 25 experts. There will be 2 local coaches; Ms Lay Hing de Kort from Cornerstone Economics and Mr Frits Israel from Doc Training and an international coach Ms. Taiana Mora-Ramis from NEX Consulting who talk about export. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions.

### Registration

To register, visit <https://cutt.ly/ExportWeek2021>

For more information, please contact Ms. Sharon Meijer of DEZHI via email [s.meijer@deaci.aw](mailto:s.meijer@deaci.aw). □

## A well-deserved recognition

**ORANJESTAD — During this year's celebration of the King's birthday, His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, King of the Dutch Kingdom, a select group of people were recognized for their special life dedication to the community and/or environment.**

This year, Turtugaruba board members Edith & Richard van der Wal were recognized as Knights in the Order of Oranje-Nassau (Ridder in de Orde van Oranje-Nassau) for their exemplary dedication and tireless effort in nature conservation in general, and especially the sea turtles of Aruba.

In his speech, the Governor of Aruba recognized Turtugaruba as one of the NGOs with the most dedicated hours per day. Edith & Richard are the heart of Turtugaruba Foundation, and with this recognition the tremendous effort of the entire foundation and all its volunteers is celebrated. A big thank you goes out to all who share the passion and dedication for sea turtle conservation in Aruba. □



# EXPLAINER: Curbing tax avoidance by multinational companies

**FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)**

— How can governments keep multinational companies from avoiding taxes by shifting their profits to low-tax countries?

For nearly a decade, nations have grappled with that question, seeking to deter companies from legally avoiding tax by resorting to so-called tax havens — typically small countries that entice companies with low or zero taxes, even though the firms do little actual business there.

International discussions over the issue gathered momentum after U.S. President Joe Biden proposed a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15% and possibly higher. The proposal has found support among other major economies such as France and Germany and has raised the prospect that a new approach to international taxation might be reached this year.

That, at least, is the goal set by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, which is overseeing talks among more than 140 countries.

A possible endorsement of the minimum tax idea at the Group of Seven finance ministers' meeting Friday and Saturday in London could add to momentum toward a deal.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has asserted that a global minimum would end a destructive "race to the bottom" in international taxation. According to the London-based Tax Justice Network advocacy group, governments lose \$245 billion annually to tax havens. If that money were instead available to governments, they could use it for, among other things, managing their heavy costs for pandemic relief.

Here are some key questions:

## WHAT IS A GLOBAL MINIMUM CORPORATE TAX?

With a global minimum, countries would change their tax laws so that if one of their companies enjoys



In this file photo dated Wednesday, June 7, 2017, The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris, France.

Associated Press

profits that go untaxed or lightly taxed offshore, that company would face additional tax at home to bring its rate up to the minimum. That is, the headquarters country would raise the tax rate for offshore income until it reached the minimum. Doing so would put a floor under corporate taxation worldwide. It would remove the incentive for companies to shift profits to low-tax countries, so the thinking goes, because if those companies escaped tax abroad, they would have to pay it at home anyway. An agreed global minimum would also weaken the motivation for countries to enact low tax rates to attract companies in the first place.

At home, Biden has proposed raising the U.S. tax rate on companies' foreign earnings to 21%. This would mark an increase from legislation passed under his predecessor Donald Trump, which was 10.5%-13.125% percent. Critics argued that that rate, coupled with exemptions, allowed corporations to minimize taxes on their foreign earnings. Even if the U.S. rate winds up above the global rate, the difference could be small enough to eliminate most room for tax manipulation.

## HOW BIG IS THE PROBLEM?

For decades, corporate earnings have been migrating to tax havens, often through complex avoidance schemes. From 1985 to 2018, the global average corporate statutory tax rate fell from 49% to 24%, thereby shifting the tax burden from companies and their shareholders to workers' wages.

In 2000-2018, U.S. companies booked half of all foreign profits in just seven low-tax jurisdictions: Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Singapore and Switzerland. Though small countries levy a low rate, they may capture what is for them significant revenue. The practice costs the U.S. Treasury around \$100 billion in lost revenue annually.

## HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ORDINARY PEOPLE?

Several ways. Taxes on the earnings of multinational companies are ultimately paid by the shareholders in those companies — a group that is, in general, wealthier than average. As the tax load on corporate revenue has declined, the overall tax burden has tended to shift to wages and labor — in other words, from generally affluent shareholders to ordinary workers.

Another reason to care:

According to the OECD, large companies that operate across borders enjoy an unfair competitive advantage by capitalizing on international tax avoidance strategies that aren't available to local-only companies.

## HOW DO COMPANIES MOVE PROFITS TO FIND THE LOWEST TAX RATE?

Though some tax avoidance schemes are illicit, most are perfectly legal. Part of the issue is the nature of the modern economy: It is increasingly based on intangible assets, like trademarks, software and other intellectual property. Those are easier to move around than are tangible assets, such as factories. One way of shifting tax liability is through a profit-sharing agreement. This involves assigning a share of costs and profits to a subsidiary in a low-tax jurisdiction. Another way is to move earnings from copyrighted software or other intellectual property to subsidiaries in countries where such earnings face little or no tax.

## THE DISPUTE OVER 'DIGITAL' TAXES

One part of the OECD talks has focused on taxing companies that do business in countries where, often because the com-

panies' businesses are Internet-based, they have no physical presence and thus pay little or no tax on those sales. France has passed a 3% "digital services tax" on revenue that is deemed to have been earned by big companies in France — a measure aimed at U.S. tech giants like Google, Facebook and Amazon. Other countries have followed suit. Washington, though, has branded such unilateral taxes as improper trade practices that unfairly target U.S. companies.

The Biden administration proposes to resolve the issue by producing a list of 100 of the world's biggest and most profitable companies — no matter what their line of business — and letting countries tax them based on their local sales. The idea would be for other countries to repeal their unilateral digital taxes and end the trade tensions they incite.

## WHERE DOES THIS PROCESS GO FROM HERE?

Any agreement faces hurdles. One key sticking point could be where to set the global minimum rate. Low-tax countries such as Ireland, which are also part of the talks, may resist a higher rate. Its prime minister, Paschal Donohoe, has called Ireland's 12.5% rate "a fair rate."

Any deal on all or some of the issues could come at a meeting of the countries in the OECD process this summer, followed by endorsement by the Group of 20 finance ministers meeting in Venice in July and then a final decision at the G-20 leaders' summit in October in Rome.

Even if there's no negotiated global agreement to sign, coordinated unilateral action by governments could, in effect, impose a minimum tax. If enough major economies that are home to multinationals, like the United States and large European countries, make clear that they will tax profits stashed in tax havens, this could achieve much of what the talks are intended to do. □

**CROSSWORD**

By THOMAS JOSEPH

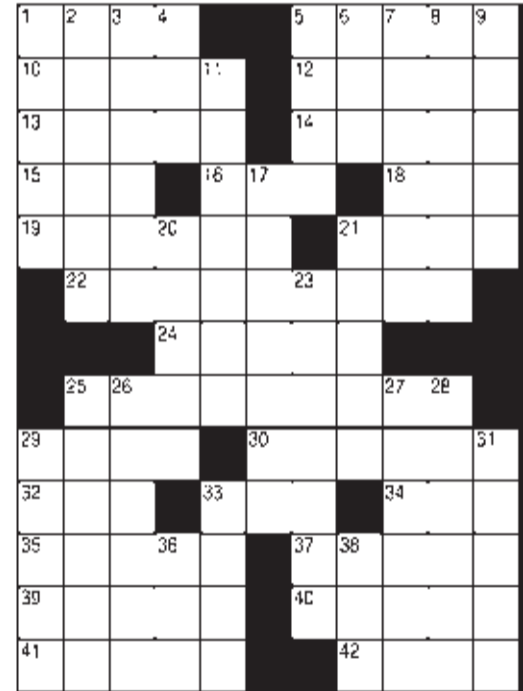
- ACROSS** 39 Stellar  
1 Aphrodite's hunter love  
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16 Mole, e.g.  
18 Coffee, in slang  
19 Aslan's place  
21 "Nuts!"  
22 They're handed down between generations  
24 Prom crowd  
25 Plane designer's concern  
29 Jupiter's wife  
30 Samples  
32 Trickery  
33 Rep.'s rival  
34 Pillbox, for one  
35 Car choice  
37 Answer to "grazie"



Yesterday's answer

- 9 Hog the  
26 Sense  
11 Wants of  
27 Goddess of wisdom  
17 Choice of colors  
28 Paltry  
29 Esau's twin  
20 Blasting stuff  
31 Vermont resort  
21 Rx amounts  
33 Refuse  
23 Cloverleaf parts  
36 Poker prize  
25 Dawn goddess  
38 Vault part



A XYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

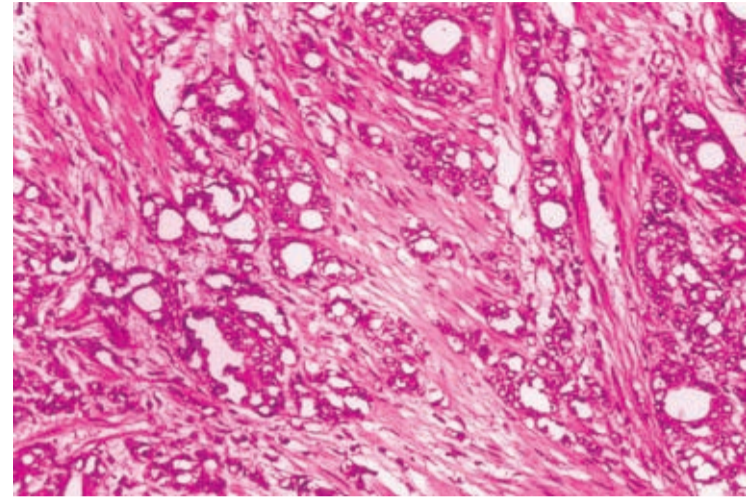
One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

**6-5 CRYPTOQUOTE**

Q U U U T M V B K H D J B Q O N  
S K Q O W V B . H N T O ' J R O T L H D  
F T Y S Q O Z V L K T U V K V Q P J V N U F  
H O U T M V Q U U J K V J H X V .

— G Y U H V Q O N P V I B  
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: A COACH IS SOMEONE WHO CAN GIVE CORRECTION WITHOUT CAUSING RESENTMENT. — JOHN WOODEN

**'Next big wave': Radiation drugs track and kill cancer cells**



This 1974 microscope image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows changes in cells indicative of adenocarcinoma of the prostate.

By CARLA K. JOHNSON  
AP Medical Writer

Doctors are reporting improved survival in men with advanced prostate cancer from an experimental drug that delivers radiation directly to tumor cells. Few such drugs are approved now, but the approach may become a new way to treat patients with other hard-to-reach or inoperable cancers. The study tested an emerging class of medicine called radiopharmaceuticals, drugs that deliver radiation directly to cancer cells. The drug in this case is a molecule that contains two parts: a tracker and a cancer-killing payload. Trillions of these molecules hunt down cancer cells, latching onto protein receptors on the cell membrane. The payload emits radiation, which hits the tumor cells within its range. "You can treat tumors that you cannot see. Anywhere the drug can go, the drug can reach tumor cells," said Dr. Frank Lin, who had no role in the study but heads a division at the National Cancer Institute that helps develop such medicine. Results were released Thursday by the American Society of Clinical Oncology ahead of its annual meeting this weekend. The study was funded by Novartis, the drug's maker, which plans to seek approvals in the United States and Europe later this year. When cancer is confined to

the prostate, radiation can be beamed onto the body or implanted in pellets. But those methods don't work well in more advanced prostate cancer. About 43,000 men in the United States each year are diagnosed with prostate cancer that has spread and is no longer responding to hormone-blocking treatment. The study tested a new way to get radiation treatment to such patients. It involved 831 men with advanced prostate cancer. Two-thirds were given the radiation drug and the rest served as a comparison group. Patients got the drug through an IV every six weeks, up to six times. After about two years, those who received the drug did better, on average. The cancer was kept at bay for nearly nine months compared to about three months for the others. Survival was better too — about 15 months versus 11 months. The gain may not seem like much, but "these patients don't have many options," said ASCO president Dr. Lori Pierce, a cancer radiation specialist at the University of Michigan. Radioactivity can reduce blood cell production, which can lead to anemia and clotting problems for patients. In the study, 53% of the patients had serious side effects compared to 38% of patients in the com-

parison group. Both groups were allowed to get other treatments. The results pave the way for government approval and will boost interest in radiation drugs, Lin said. Others already in use include Novartis' Lutathera for a rare type of cancer of the stomach and gut. And Bayer's Xofigo is approved for men whose prostate cancer has spread to the bone but not elsewhere. Xofigo targets areas where the body is trying to repair bone loss from tumor damage, but it isn't directly aimed at prostate cancer cells wherever they may be in the body. Since the experimental drug targets tumor cells, "that would be a first for prostate cancer," Lin said. In the coming decade, such drugs "will be a major thrust of cancer research," said Dr. Charles Kunos, who worked on standards for radiopharmaceutical research at the National Cancer Institute before leaving to join University of Kentucky's Markey Cancer Center. "It will be the next big wave of therapeutic development." "There's great potential" with drugs being tested for melanoma and breast, pancreatic and other cancers, said Dr. Mary-ellen Taplin of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, who enrolled patients in the study and reviewed the data. As for prostate cancer, "it opens up a range of future strategies," including at earlier stages of disease and alongside other treatments, said study leader Dr. Michael Morris of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York. □

Associated Press



# Hundreds of lakes in U.S., Europe are losing oxygen

By **DREW COSTLEY**  
AP Science Writer

Oxygen levels have dropped in hundreds of lakes in the United States and Europe over the last four decades, a new study found.

And the authors said declining oxygen could lead to increased fish kills, algal blooms and methane emissions.

Researchers examined the temperature and dissolved oxygen — the amount of oxygen in the water — in nearly 400 lakes and found that declines were widespread. Their study, published Wednesday in the journal *Nature*, found dissolved oxygen fell 5.5% in surface waters of these lakes and 18.6% in deep waters.

The authors said their findings suggest that warming temperatures and decreased water clarity from human activity are causing the oxygen decline.

"Oxygen is one of the best indicators of ecosystem health, and changes in this study reflect a pronounced human footprint," said co-author Craig E. Williamson, a biology professor at Miami University in Ohio.

That footprint includes warming caused by climate change and decreased water clarity caused in part by runoff from sewage, fertilizer, cars and power plants.

Dissolved oxygen losses in Earth's water systems have been reported before. A 2017 study of oxygen levels in the world's oceans showed a 2% decline since 1960. But less was known about lakes, which lost two to nine times as much oxygen as oceans, the new study's authors said.

Prior to this study, other researchers had reported on oxygen declines in individual lakes over a long period of time. But none of have looked at as many lakes around the world, said Samuel B. Fey, a Reed College biology professor who studies lakes and was not involved in this study.

"I think one of the really interesting findings here is that the authors were able to show that there's this pretty pronounced decline in dissolved oxygen concentrations in both the surface and (deep) parts of the lake," Fey said.

The deep water drop in oxygen levels is critical for aquatic organisms that are more sensitive to temperature increases, such as cold water fish. During summer months, they depend on cooler temperatures found deeper in the water, but if deep waters are low on oxygen, these organisms can't survive.

"Those are the conditions that sometimes lead to fish kills in water bodies," said study co-author Kevin C. Rose, a professor of biology at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. "It really means that a lot of habitats for cold water fish could become inhospitable."

Other organisms, Rose said, are more tolerant of warmer temperatures found at the surface level and can get enough oxygen by re-



In this Tuesday, Oct. 30, 2012, file photo, Kim Bertini looks over some of the 15,000 dead fish that washed up near her backyard on Lake Madeline in Galveston, Texas.

Associated Press

maining near the surface, where water meets air.

About a quarter of the lakes examined actually showed increasing oxygen in surface waters, which Rose says is a bad sign because it's likely attributable to increased algal blooms — sudden growth of blue green algae.

In these lakes, he said, dissolved oxygen was "very low" in deep waters and was unlivable for many species.

And the sediment in such oxygen-starved lakes tends to give off methane, a potent greenhouse gas, research shows.

Lakes examined in the new study were in the U.S. or Europe, except for one in Japan and a few in New Zealand. The authors said there was insufficient data to include other parts of the world. Rose said lakes outside the study area probably are experiencing drops in dissolved oxygen, too. The reason, he said, is that warmer temperatures

from climate change reduce the ability of oxygen to dissolve in water — its solubility. □



**Editor**

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# Finn's Mac experience leads to reconstituted Crowded House

By DAVID BAUDER

AP Entertainment Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Touring as a member of Fleetwood Mac in 2018-19 made Neil Finn appreciate the memorable band in his own history.

Two years later, Finn has brought that group, Crowded House, back to life with his sons Liam and Elroy, producer Mitchell Froom and original bass player Nick Seymour. A new album, "Dreamers Are Waiting," arrives Friday.

"There's a sense of occasion attached to that band, in my head, I suppose," Finn, 63, said on a video call from his native New Zealand.

"Coming off of Fleetwood Mac, when we surprisingly had the opportunity to be part of a great, classic band, it reminded me of the gravitas and honor that comes with that," the singer and songwriter said. "In the audience there were young people who had grown up with the songs, and were singing them as if they were just as current today as they were 30 years ago."

One singalong included in the set was Finn's "Don't Dream It's Over," from the 1987 Crowded House debut that also produced the hit "Something So Strong." Crowded House never matched that early success in the United States but remained popular worldwide with songs like "Better



This photo provided by Crowded House shows Neil Finn of the band Crowded House performing at a concert in Auckland, New Zealand, Saturday, April 24, 2021.

Associated Press

Be Home Soon," "Weather With You" and "Distant Sun." They called it quits with a farewell concert outside the Sydney Opera House in 1996 that drew a crowd estimated around 200,000 people.

The band reconvened twice in the 2000s with Matt Sherrod replacing original drummer Paul Hester, who died in 2005.

Finn said Seymour and his sons were enthusiastic when he suggested trying again. Froom, who produced Crowded House's first three albums, turned Finn down when he asked him to join in the late 1980s because he was pursuing a

producing career. This time he was onboard.

"These three people have more to do with Crowded House, understand the ethos, the humor and the music, and have a natural intuition for it than anyone else on the planet," Finn said.

Liam, a guitarist, and Elroy, a drummer, have their own independent music careers and have also worked with Neil before on projects, minimizing any awkwardness that comes from being in a band with dad.

The new Crowded House started recording new music in a Los Angeles studio, but the COVID-19 lockdown

forced them to abandon the session before finishing.

"Dreamers Are Waiting" was completed remotely.

"We were forced by circumstances to throw things in the air and reassemble them," Finn said.

They chose the energetic cuts "Playing with Fire" and "Whatever You Want" to make videos and reintroduce Crowded House to the world, although the album's heart is arguably revealed in a more moody middle, with songs "Start of Something" and "Too Good for This World."

"Each of the five persons has deep connections to the origins of the band

but are also brimming with ideas for how good it possibly could be," he said. "That feels like a really good place for a band to be."

The new Crowded House has also been able to experience something few other musical acts have over the past 15 months — an honest-to-goodness concert tour before packed arenas. They played a dozen gigs in New Zealand, where the smaller, island country was able to open things up more swiftly than elsewhere in the world.

At first, the band and audience members stared at each other, stunned. Maybe it was a year without live music, but it felt like five.

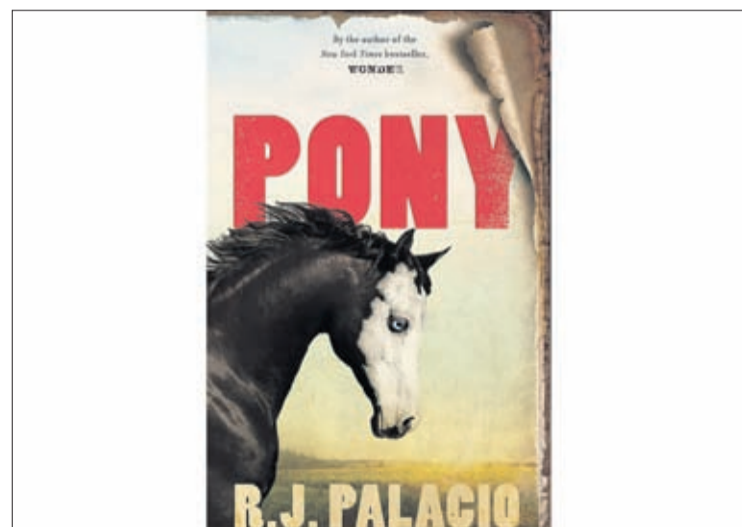
"We were determined to make the most of it," Finn said. "We weren't going to slip into that slightly errant behavior you get on tour — 'Oh, where are we tonight?' You can allow a little thing going wrong to spoil your whole night. We couldn't afford to. We had 12 shows. We had to get over what went wrong instantly."

It has left them eager to play more.

Finn's time with Fleetwood Mac, where he and Tom Petty's former guitarist, Mike Campbell, replaced Lindsey Buckingham, was "a glorious experience because I didn't expect it."

"It's good to be cast in a different role and not be the frontman for a change," he said. □

# R.J. Palacio's 'Pony' to be published in September



This book cover image released by Alfred A. Knopf for Young Readers shows "Pony" by R.J. Palacio, releasing Sept. 28.

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — R.J. Palacio's next book is a world apart from her million-selling debut "Wonder."

Random House Children's Books announced Thursday that Palacio's "Pony" will be published Sept. 28, with an announced first printing of 500,000 copies. The story of a young boy's "harrowing yet distinctively beautiful journey" in the mid-1800s, "Pony" is Palacio's first novel that doesn't feature characters from "Wonder," a contemporary story of a fifth-grader with a disfigured face that was inspired in part by the Natalie Merchant song of the same name.

"Wonder" came out in 2012 and is the basis for a handful of spinoffs, including a picture book and a graphic novel. It was adapted into a 2017 film starring Julia Roberts and Owen Wilson and has sold more

than 12 million copies, according to Random House.

"Pony" has been with me for quite some time, partly because it took me a while to figure out how to tell an epic tale in only 60,000 words, but mostly because it's a very personal story for me," Palacio, 57, said in a statement. "From the time I was very young, my greatest fear had always been that I'd somehow be left alone. It's not an uncommon childhood fear, and this novel is about facing that fear, but it's also about realizing that the connections we make in our lifetimes never really end."

"So, yes, it's a story of resilience and courage, an adventure story in the most classic of ways, part American western, part ghost story — but for me, ultimately, it's a story about love." □

# 'It's me': Williams urges herself to erase deficit at French

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN and ANDREW DAMPF

**PARIS (AP)** — Even a 23-time Grand Slam champion needs to remind herself now and then how to play winning tennis.

Serena Williams employed verbal motivation to help her recover from a 4-1 deficit in the second set of a 6-4, 6-4 victory over fellow American Danielle Collins in the third round of the French Open on Friday.

Yelling, "C'mon," and "Move your feet," Williams started dominating again with big serves and crushed returns that the 50th-ranked Collins had no answer for.

"That felt really good for me," Williams said. "Things were not going my way. It's not like she gave me those games. I had to earn it and turn it around. That was really positive for me going into the next match.

"I needed to find me, know who I am," Williams added. "Nobody is Serena out here. It's me. It's pretty cool."

The turnaround was also evidenced in Collins' body language and conversations with herself. The Floridian, who grew up emulating the Williams sisters and playing on public courts just like they did, let her racket drop from her hands and then kicked it away in frustration after missing one particularly important shot. Collins also sarcastically said, "That's excellent," after



United States Serena Williams react as she plays against United States's Danielle Collins during their third round match on day 6, of the French Open tennis tournament at Roland Garros in Paris, France, Friday, June 4, 2021.

shanking another shot following a long rally that appeared to conclude with an awkward bounce in the final game.

Williams needed three sets to get by Mihaela Buzarnescu in the previous round and she clearly did not want to go the distance again this time. Even when a series of untimely double-faults early in the second set enabled Collins to win four consecutive games.

Williams' determination was also witnessed during the first set, when she ran down a drop shot from behind the court and won the point to

break for a 4-3 lead.

When it was done, Williams and Collins both smiled as they shared a friendly embrace at the net.

Collins said that she told Williams she would "love to see her win the whole thing."

"She's the greatest player of all time," Collins added. "I think we all admire and love Serena, especially the American players. It was pretty surreal today to go out there and be playing against somebody I remember watching at age 9 and 10."

Still chasing a record-tying 24th Grand Slam singles ti-

tle, the 39-year-old Williams next faces 21st-seeded Elena Rybakina, who defeated Elena Vesnina 6-1, 6-4 to reach the fourth round for the first time at a major.

Meanwhile, Russian player Yana Sizikova was released from police custody after being arrested on suspicion of match-fixing during last year's tournament in Paris. The 26-year-old Sizikova denies the allegations.

Aside from Williams, top women's players continue to exit Roland Garros.

The latest to go home was third-seeded Aryna Sabalenka, who was upset by

Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-4, 2-6, 6-0.

Sabalenka had been the highest remaining seed after top-ranked Ash Barty retired from her second-round match due to an injury on Thursday. Second-seeded Naomi Osaka withdrew after the first round, saying she is taking a break from competition for mental health reasons.

Sabalenka's 39 unforced errors helped Pavlyuchenkova reach the fourth round for the first time since she made it to the quarterfinals in Paris a decade ago.

"That was a while ago," the 31st-seeded Pavlyuchenkova said. "I'm enjoying much more now every point (in) the tough matches than I used to before. I guess that also (is) the reason why I'm still here in the second week."

Pavlyuchenkova's next opponent will be Victoria Azarenka, who beat 23rd-seeded Madison Keys 6-2, 6-2 in 70 minutes.

Early in the afternoon, play was interrupted briefly by rain on all courts besides the main stadium — where the roof was closed. Federico Delbonis said the interruption helped him calm down after stress started to get hold of him toward the end of the second set of his match with Fabio Fognini.

Delbonis took a quick shower and eventually prevailed 6-4, 6-1, 6-3. □

Associated Press

## Olympic champ Rollins-McNeal banned 5 years in doping case

**MONACO (AP)** — Olympic hurdles champion Brianna Rollins-McNeal was banned for five years on Friday in a doping case, ruling her out of this year's Tokyo Games and the 2024 Paris Games.

The Athletics Integrity Unit said the American's second career ban was for "tampering within the results management process" of doping control samples.

The 29-year-old hurdler's ban runs to August 2024,

days after the Paris Olympics finish.

However, Rollins-McNeal has started an appeal which could yet let her run in the 100-meter hurdles at next month's Tokyo Olympics.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport made an interim decision to freeze her ban so she can run at this month's U.S. Olympic trials, the AIU said. The full appeal will be heard before the Tokyo Olympics open on July 23. Details of the disciplinary

case were not published by the AIU, which cited confidentiality reasons. Those could be related to medical records.

Rollins-McNeal missed the 2017 season to serve a one-year ban for missing doping tests.

Her career-best time of 12.26 seconds makes her the fourth-fastest woman in history in the event. She also won the 100-meter hurdles title at the 2013 world championships in Moscow. □



In this Thursday, Aug. 18, 2016 file photo, Gold medal winner Brianna Rollins from the United States shows off her medal during the medal ceremony for the women's 100-meter hurdles final during the athletics competitions of the 2016 Summer Olympics at the Olympic stadium in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Associated Press

# Nets-Bucks: Second-round series, NBA Finals-level talent

By BRIAN MAHONEY

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Kevin Durant, James Harden and Kyrie Irving on one side. Giannis Antetokounmpo, Khris Middleton and Jrue Holiday on the other.

Three former MVPs. Seven NBA scoring titles. The two highest-scoring teams in the league.

Brooklyn against Milwaukee is only a second-round series. Yet with all this talent, there's a little bit of an NBA Finals feel.

"I think it's meant for a lot of the best players in the league to go up against one another and show why we are who we are," Irving said.

The teams played three thrillers during the regular season and Brooklyn coach Steve Nash said the potential is there for this Eastern Conference semifinal between the No. 2-seeded Nets and No. 3 Bucks to be a classic.

"We'll see how it plays out, but they're playing as well as any team in the league right now. We have the talent to match any team in the league and it's just a matter of who performs, who has that grit and toughness to try to get ahead in the series and then see how the other



Brooklyn Nets guard James Harden, Kyrie Irving (11) and forward Kevin Durant react after a basket against the Boston Celtics in the first half of Game 5 during an NBA basketball first-round playoff series, Tuesday, June 1, 2021, in New York.

Associated Press

team responds," Nash said. "Definitely on paper you could see this being a classic series, but let's see who brings it and who has the rhythm and timing and performances that are sharper."

Game 1 is Saturday night in Brooklyn, with both teams rested and ready after cruising through the first round. Milwaukee blew away Miami in a sweep that emphatically avenged its sec-

ond-round ouster a year ago. The only thing stopping the Nets from a sweep of their own was Jayson Tatum's 50-point outburst in Game 3 in Boston.

Plenty of guys can go for 50 in this series.

Antetokounmpo, the two-time NBA MVP, nearly did against Brooklyn on May 2, pouring in 49 to outduel Durant, who had 42, in the Bucks' 117-114 victory. Milwaukee won again two

nights later, 124-118, to sweep the two-game set that Harden missed with injury. He made it back for the playoffs and Brooklyn's Big Three combined for 85.2 points per game against Boston, including 104 in Game 4 to match the highest total for a trio in NBA postseason history. Milwaukee has good defenders, with Antetokounmpo the defensive player of the year last sea-

son and Holiday long considered one of the league's best defensive guards. But nobody is even pretending this series will be won with stops, not with the Bucks averaging 120.1 points to Brooklyn's 118.6 — despite just eight games with Durant, Harden and Irving — during the regular season. "They've got three of the best scorers of all time on their team," Milwaukee's P.J. Tucker said. "They're going to score a bunch of points, we know that, but we've just got to make it as tough as possible. We've got to make them work, earn every single point, nothing easy and whatever happens, happens. But we're going to go battle and compete. Blood, sweat, tears. Leave it all on the floor."

Other things to know about the series:

## SEASON SERIES

Brooklyn never had its three stars together against Milwaukee. Irving missed the Nets' 125-123 home victory on Jan. 18 in their second game after acquiring Harden from Houston. Durant and Harden, who have combined for two MVP awards and seven scoring titles, put up 64 points that night. □

# 20 of 30 MLB teams reach 85% vaccinations, relax protocols



San Diego Padres' Fernando Tatis Jr. scores from third on a wild pitch by New York Mets pitcher Taijuan Walker (99) during the fifth inning of a baseball game Thursday, June 3, 2021, in San Diego.

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Two-thirds of Major League Baseball's 30 teams have been able to relax coronavirus protocols after four additional clubs qualified

and raised the total to 20 franchises reaching 85% vaccinations for players and other on-field personnel. The commissioner's of-

fice and the players' association said Friday that two additional teams had reached the 85% level of having received final doses and will be able to relax protocols within the next two weeks once they are fully vaccinated.

Relaxed protocols include dropping the requirements for facemasks in dugouts and bullpens, and loosening restrictions on mobility during road trips.

MLB said 85.2% of Tier 1 individuals such as players, managers, coaches, trainers and support personnel had been partially or fully vaccinated, up just 0.7% from the previous week, and 82.9% had been fully vaccinated, up 1.7% from the previous week.

There were two positive

tests — one for a major league player and one for a Triple-A player — among 9,291 tests in the past week, a 0.02% positive rate.

So far this season, there have been 64 positive tests — 36 players, 28 staff — among 185,551 samples tested, a 0.03% positive rate. The positive tests are among 25 teams.

The Chicago Cubs said Friday they will move to 100% capacity at Wrigley Field starting with a June 11 game against St. Louis.

Only Texas among the 30 major league teams began this season at 100% after fans weren't permitted last year because of the coronavirus pandemic. Atlanta went to full capacity on May 7.

Others announcing the

move to full capacity in-season have been Atlanta (May 7), Arizona (May 25), Boston (May 29), Baltimore (June 1), Cincinnati (June 2), Washington (June 11), Philadelphia (June 12), St. Louis (June 14), Milwaukee (June 25) and Minnesota (July 5). MLB announced a "Vaccinate At The Plate" program in which each of the 30 teams will stage at least one event in June offering a free ticket to anyone getting vaccinated at the ballpark. The commissioner's office said more than 1 million shots had been given at ballparks during the pandemic and that MLB and teams had provided more than 1.5 million PCR tests to schools, youth academies, charities and communities. □